

PREFACE

Public administration is bureaucracy in the positive sense of the idea. Max Weber defined bureaucracy in his typology of powers as the most effective organizational form. His critics aimed to demonstrate that bureaucracy could never be effective, because it is unfit for correcting itself compared with committed defects. 'Modern' public administration is a concept of qualities and values that contains the capacity of self-correction. 'Modern' public administration reflects more than a 'contemporary' or an 'actual' sense; it is also able to take into adaptations and innovations. 'Modern' public administration implements the *sine qua non* elements of the ideal type of bureaucracy, but in addition to this, it uses the new forms of public cooperation and communication at the same time, and creates limited scope for changes and flexibility.

The needs of innovation and adaptation in public administration have many sources. First, the metamorphosis of the infrastructural and technical conditions of the administration is worth mentioning. To use a medical analogy: the 'diagnostical' potential of the public administration increased on a huge scale. It must be evident that the potential power and organization of the public administration should be in harmony with growing possibilities. The quality of the public administration of a rule-of-law-state still depends on the relation between possibility, capacity, and effectivity.

The motive for change and adaptation is in transformation along with the territorial dimension of the public administration. Public administration still belongs to the nation state but in a different manner as it used to be. The phenomenon of globalization could be followed by the public administration, if it spills over limits of the national state. The regionalization and self-governments make a new constitutional situation, from which the nation state seems as a confederation of several administrative bodies. The basic question is therefore if this kind of fragmentation correspond to the basic function of public administration.

For public communities, which are sometimes identical with the national state, sometimes wider or less than the state, is an earnest of success that the public administration would be equal to the requirements of changing conditions. The recognition of the needs and conditions, and the searching for methods of adjustment to them is not futurology, but is a special field of scientific thought. Every initiative which makes this aspects for the matter in dispute is welcome.

The *Department of Public Administration Law of the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences in Szeged* is devoted to a comprehensive approach of facts and development of public administration. The manifestation of the mission of our department was a round-table conference organized recently by any enthusiastic colleges. The edited version of the presentations is here accessible for the gentle readers. It is to be hoped that the below published studies contribute to the better understanding of 'modern' public administration.

Benevolo lectori salutem!

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